28: Spiro--82-83
116, 843, 774, 602

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-1-2
Ifalik

"It is during the period of gestation that the foetus acquires its soul.(ngas) It is the ngas that differentiates the dead from the living, so that before the entrance of the ngas, the infant is not yet alive, and when it departs the person dies. The ngas, whose size is unknown, resides in the 'stomach', and is conceived of as a vaporous substance. ('all same wind'). But its actual formation and derivation is a matter of speculation. Arogeligar maintained that Aluelap gives the baby its ngas in the eighth month of pregnancy. Others said that the soul enters the embryo through the umbilical cord. (1) The chiefs, on the other hand, maintained that the soul evolves in the baby in the course of its development, like any other organ, though the nature and time if its growth is unknown. .

But the foetus not only receives its ngas during the period of gestation, it also receives its blood. Both blood (tra) and food, which the foetus requires to keep alive, are received by means of the umbilicus. Blood is necessary for life. If a person has much blood, he will be strong; if he has little, he will be weak; and if he has none, he will die.

But though the foetus receives its blood from its mother, all questions concerning

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"1. Thus deriving from the mother, which would explain matrilineal descent."

[83] 'blood relationship' elicited negative replies. All blood is the same, there being no differences between individuals or people, and the concept of relationship through blood is completely foreign to them. (2)"

"2. Again it is possible that matrilineal descent is related to the fact of the infant's receiving of his blood from his mother. But questions of this kind, as well as other similar questions sent my informants into peels of laughter. How should they, or any one else know the answers to these questions, and who but an idiot would bother about them. Auelimar, one of my best informants expressed the concensus of the group when he exclaimed, 'who can savvy that?'"